

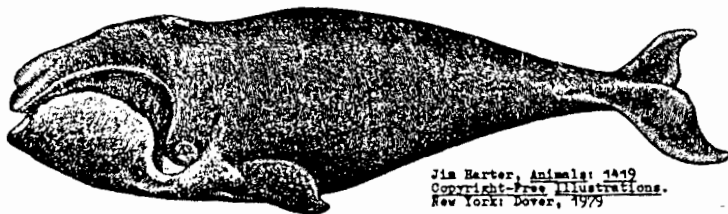
the Cetacean smile
is enigmatic
only to Man--
the Master of Symbols
the Great Communicator
necromancing his computers
sequestered with his lord tv
spinning satyriastic schemes
tossing through bulimic dreams

so many
coming on
with glitter noise and tedium
wanting and wanton
how can he stand up to them?
so he deals less bruisingly
with pictures
with which he can range far
and be selective
daguerreotype to beta max
give me my MTV!
cables and wires and beams traverse the globe
for an endless supply of pictures
and Man calls this Communication
and Man suffers from loneliness
from lack of knowing
and of being known
for the sum of all these flicks
and flying pix is enigma
'What's it all about?'
he asks Alfie
Alfie says
'We reflect our pictures
our pictures reflect us
a fun house hall of mirrors
and a horror hall of fears,'
says Alfie
'Ask Freud
ask anybody.'

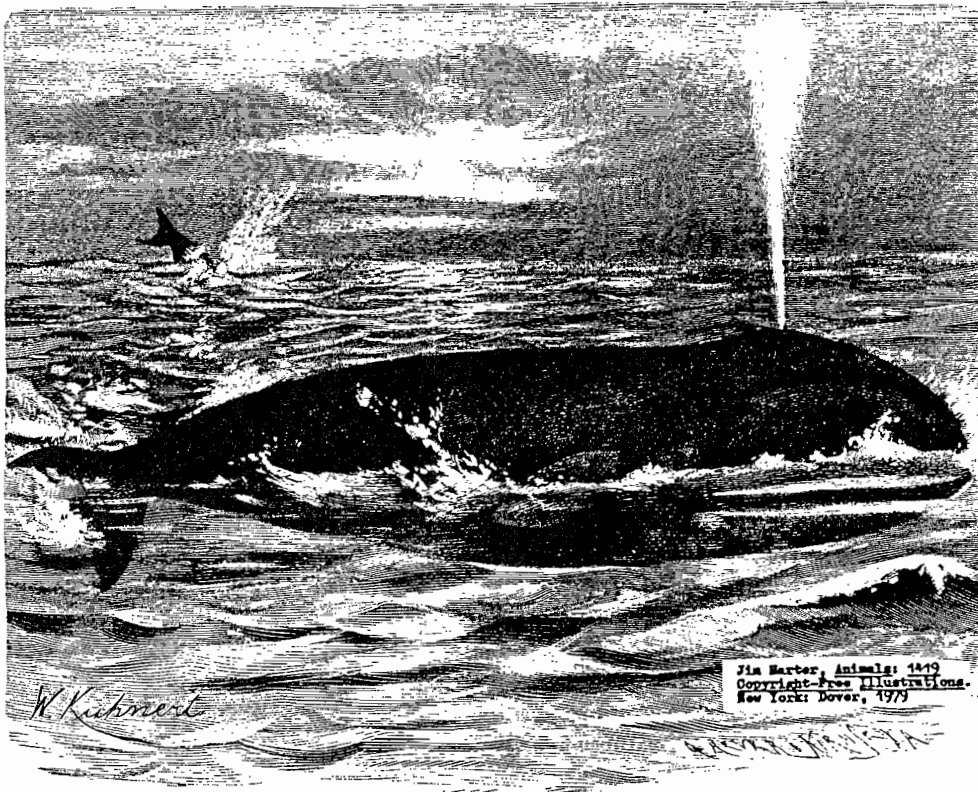
but the Cetacean smiles
a real smile
a whale's smile
your pictures--
what can Man know of them?
of water and light
of ancestors
great deeds
and great understandings
('That big brain-what does he do with it? If he
isn't manipulating the sea, what can he be doing?')

THE WAKE OF THE BUDDHA

PAULETTE CALLEN



Jim Harter, Animals: 1979
Copyright-Free Illustrations.
New York: Dover, 1979



are your pictures of peace?
 there is too much suffocating noise
 endless death-dealing filth
 too many too many harpoons
 ripping the fabric of your lives for peace
 and yet you are grace and beauty
 beaming serenity in a man-made-bloody sea
 your pictures must be also
 hanging in the galleries of your song
 gleaming in the joyous wake of your shining flukes
 shimmering at their surface and shadowing down still and strong
 in the depths of yourselves and the sea

'Do they communicate?'
 Man-Symbol-Master is also
 Master of the Absurd Question
 he picture-makes and chatters
 and flings it all about
 hoping someone will look and listen
 he creates false ideals and real life is no longer enough
 even when that life is his own
 he can never measure up to the image forever assaulting
 his brain's retina
 and he grieves

'What is the purpose of a great brain?'
to know oneself
to grow in grace
to smile, at last, like a whale